

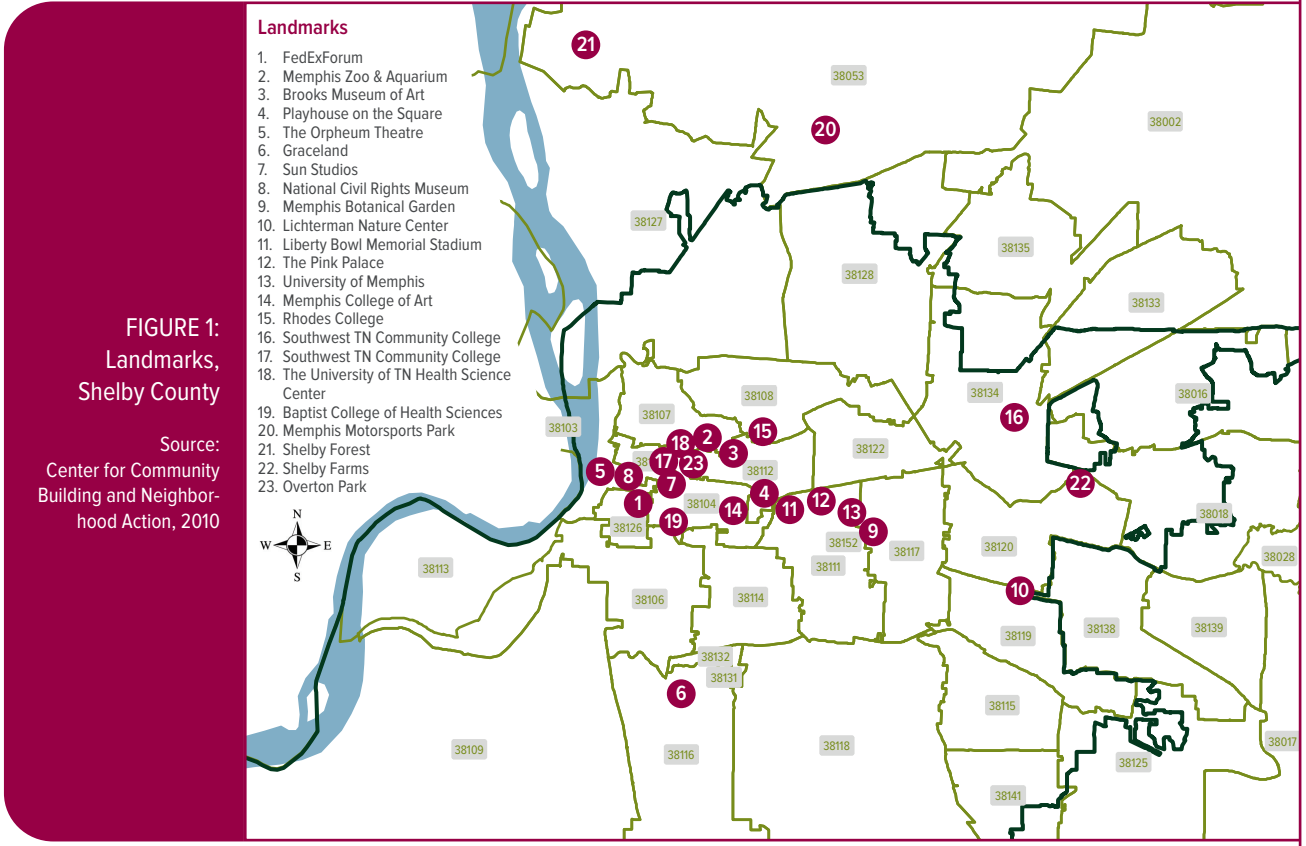


## Community

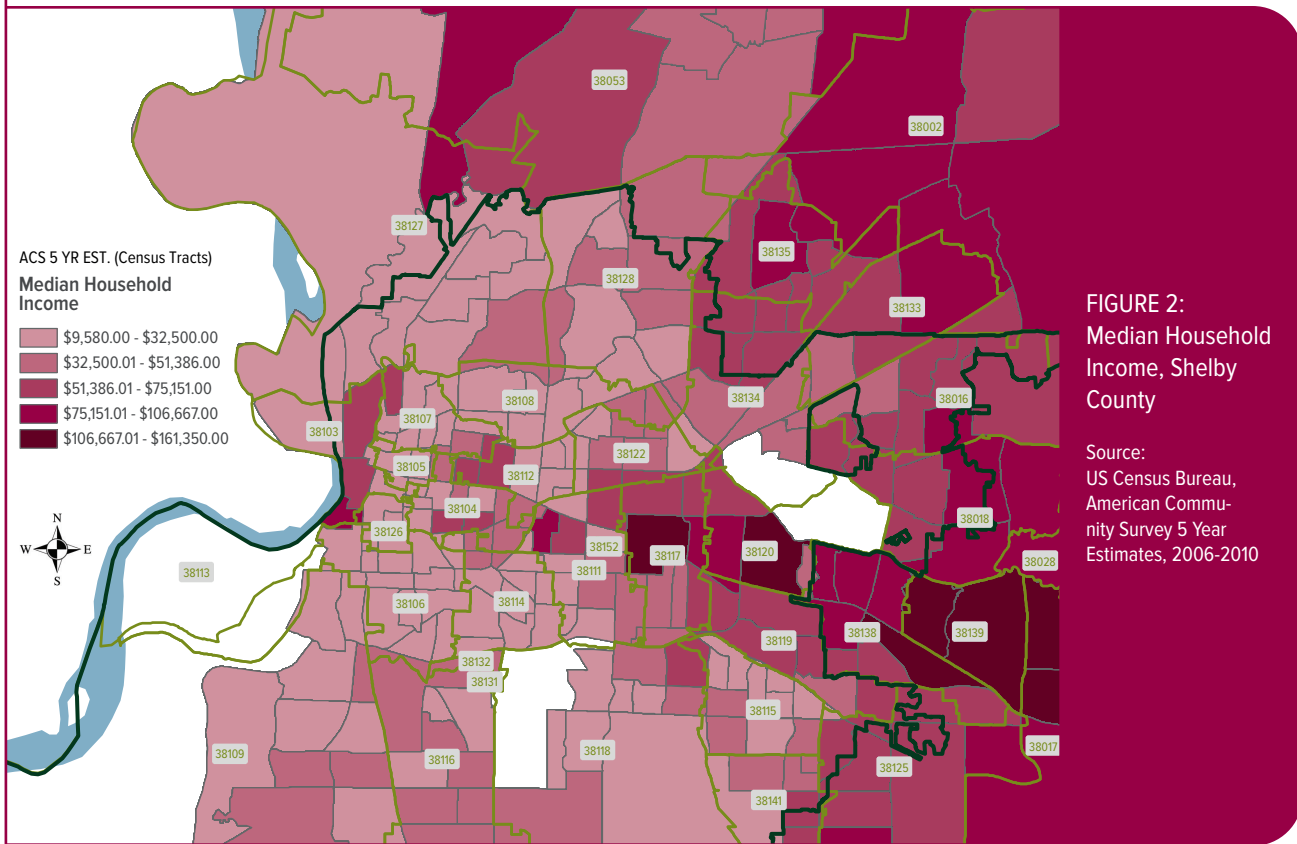
It's no surprise that parents' income matters for their children's development. It takes money to provide for a child's needs. Even when a family has enough to cover basic necessities like food and shelter, they may struggle to make ends meet and find it difficult to purchase resources like quality child care and learning materials that can give children a strong start in life.

What is often overlooked, however, is that the neighborhood where a child lives can have effects over and above parental income and other family-level influences. In other words, neighborhoods matter—even for children in families with adequate incomes and positive home environments. Crime, widespread unemployment, social isolation, and lack of community resources create unhealthy environments for children's development.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter takes a look at the most recent available data on community-level factors that have been shown to affect children's chances for later achievement and success.



Most of the data is presented at the census-tract level. To ensure readability, we have not labeled census tracts in the following maps. Instead, we include zip code labels to provide a context for the tract-level statistics. We have also provided a map of well-known landmarks (FIGURE 1) to help readers orient themselves.



**FIGURE 2:**  
Median Household  
Income, Shelby  
County

Source:  
US Census Bureau,  
American Commu-  
nity Survey 5 Year  
Estimates, 2006-2010

## Neighborhood income has been linked to children’s outcomes.

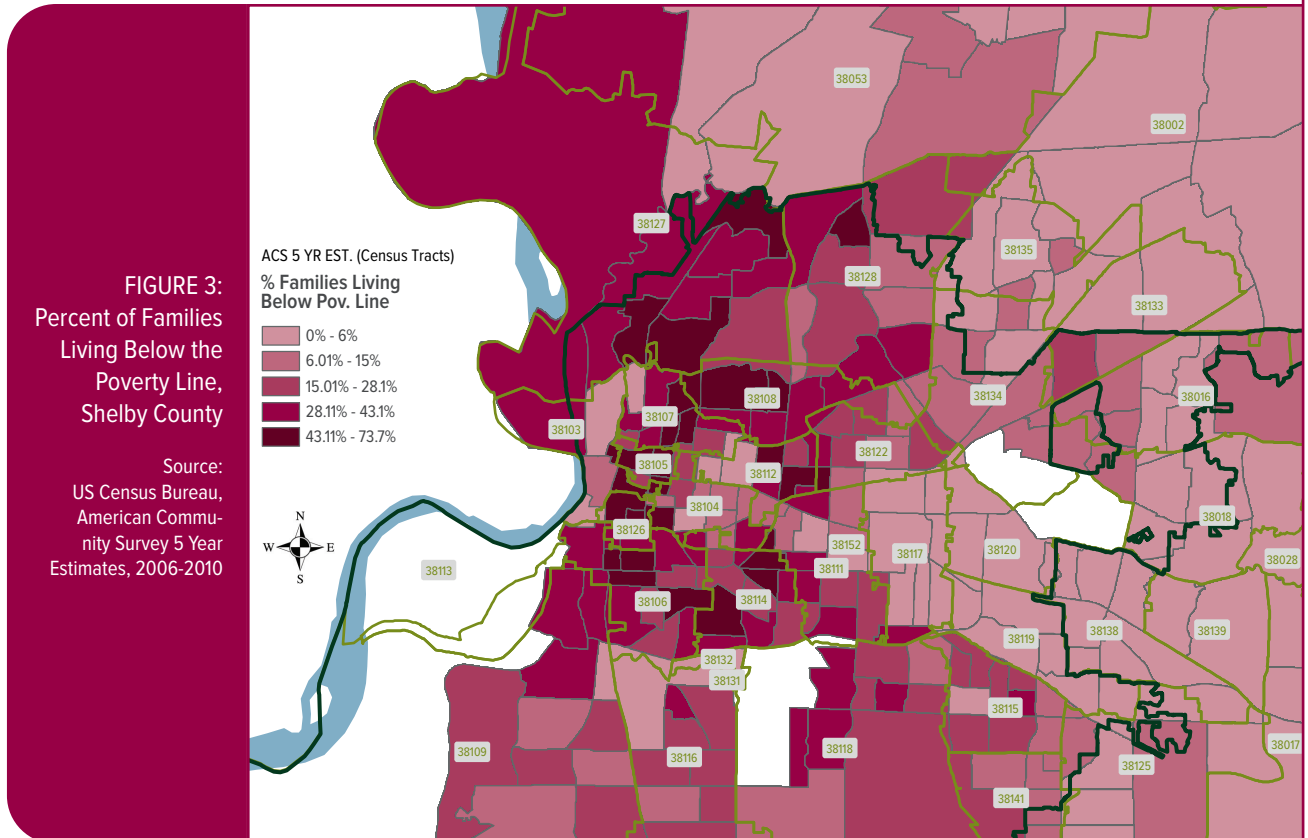
Research consistently links family income to child well-being. The effects of income begin early: by age three, lower-income children tend to have lower cognitive scores and more behavioral problems.<sup>2</sup>

Living in a low-income neighborhood can have effects that are independent of family income. In areas of concentrated disadvantage, children are likely to face multiple risk factors that threaten their educational, emotional, and social outcomes.<sup>3,4</sup>

FIGURE 2 depicts the median household incomes for Census Tracts in Shelby County.

- Census Tract 114 (in Zip Code 38107) has the lowest median household income in Shelby County (\$9,580).
- Census Tract 213.53 (in 38139) has the highest median income in the county (\$161,350).
- The highest median income in Memphis is in Census Tract 213.11 (38120) with \$124,531.
- 91 out of 221 Census Tracts in Shelby County have a median household income of \$32,500 or less.

## Neighborhood poverty and economic hardship threaten children's healthy development.



## Poverty

Research suggests that there is a critical threshold or “tipping point” of neighborhood poverty. When the percentage of poor families in a neighborhood reaches 20 to 30 percent, negative family and child outcomes increase sharply.<sup>5</sup>

High-poverty neighborhoods are typically defined as having more than 30 percent of households living below the federal poverty threshold.<sup>6</sup> Children in high-poverty neighborhoods are at higher risk of health problems, behavioral difficulties, teen pregnancy, high school drop-out, and substance abuse, even after accounting for family characteristics.<sup>5</sup>

FIGURE 3 shows each Census Tract's percentage of families living in poverty.

- Census Tract 45 (Zip Code 38126) has the largest percentage of families that are living below the poverty line (73.7%).
- Census Tract 204 (38053) has the lowest percentage of families that are living below poverty with 0.6 percent.
- In 12 out of 221 Census Tracts, 50 percent or more of families are living below the poverty line.



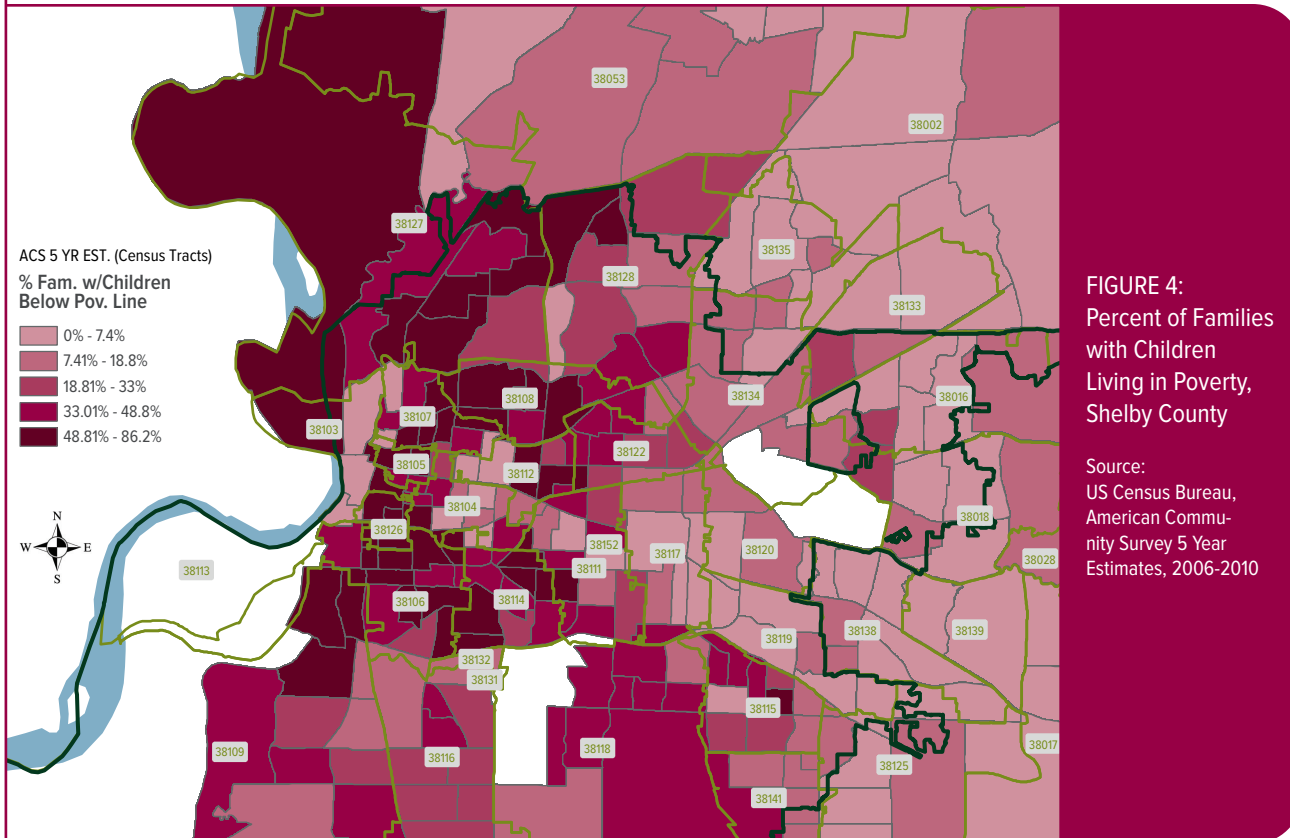


FIGURE 4:  
Percent of Families  
with Children  
Living in Poverty,  
Shelby County

## Child Poverty

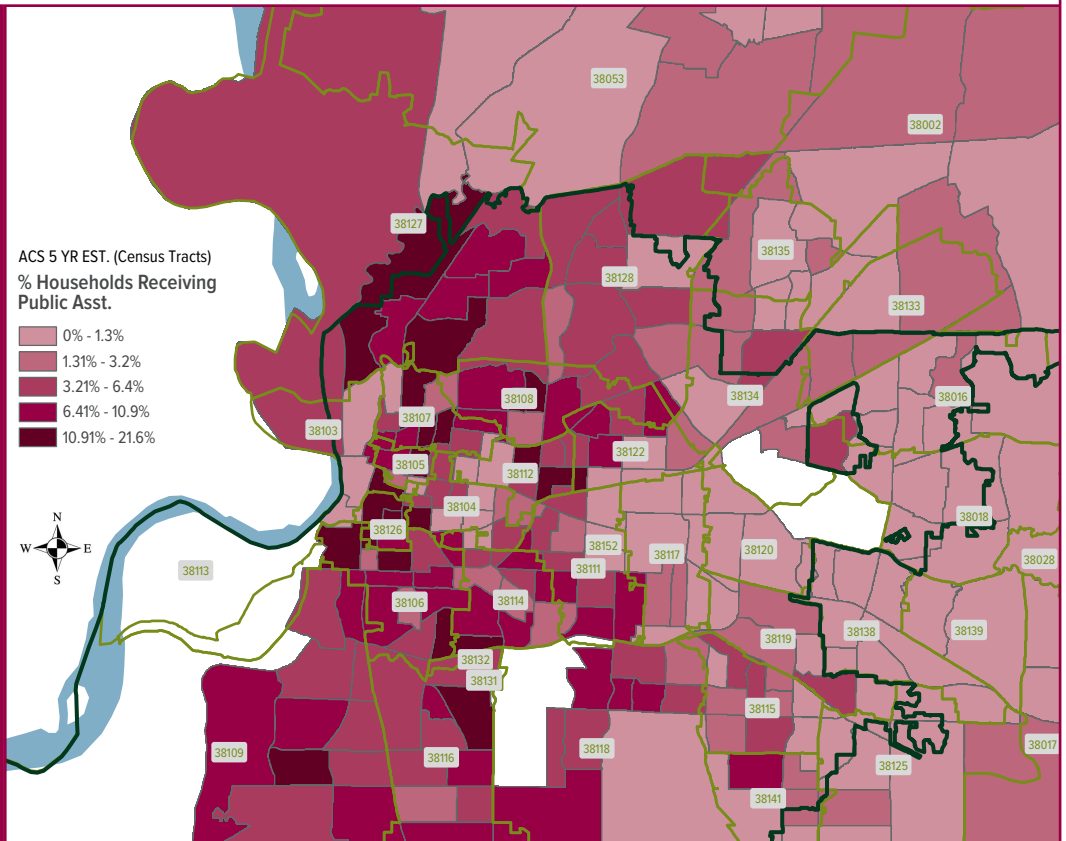
Living in high-poverty neighborhoods is associated with lower-quality learning experiences in the homes of young children, even after family income is taken into account. Child poverty can affect physical health, cognitive abilities, educational achievement, and emotional and social adjustment.<sup>7,8</sup> Recent research has even linked early poverty to long-term changes in children's brain development.<sup>9,10</sup>

In Shelby County, high-poverty neighborhoods are also neighborhoods with large numbers of children. FIGURE 4 shows the distribution of Shelby County families with children living in poverty.

- Census Tract 8 (Zip Code 38108) has the largest percentage of families with children that are living below the poverty line in the county, with 86.2 percent.
- Tract 208.20 (38002) has the lowest percentage of families living below poverty.
- In 41 out of 221 Census Tracts, at least 50 percent of families with children are living below the poverty line.

**FIGURE 5:**  
Percent of Households receiving Public Assistance Income, Shelby County

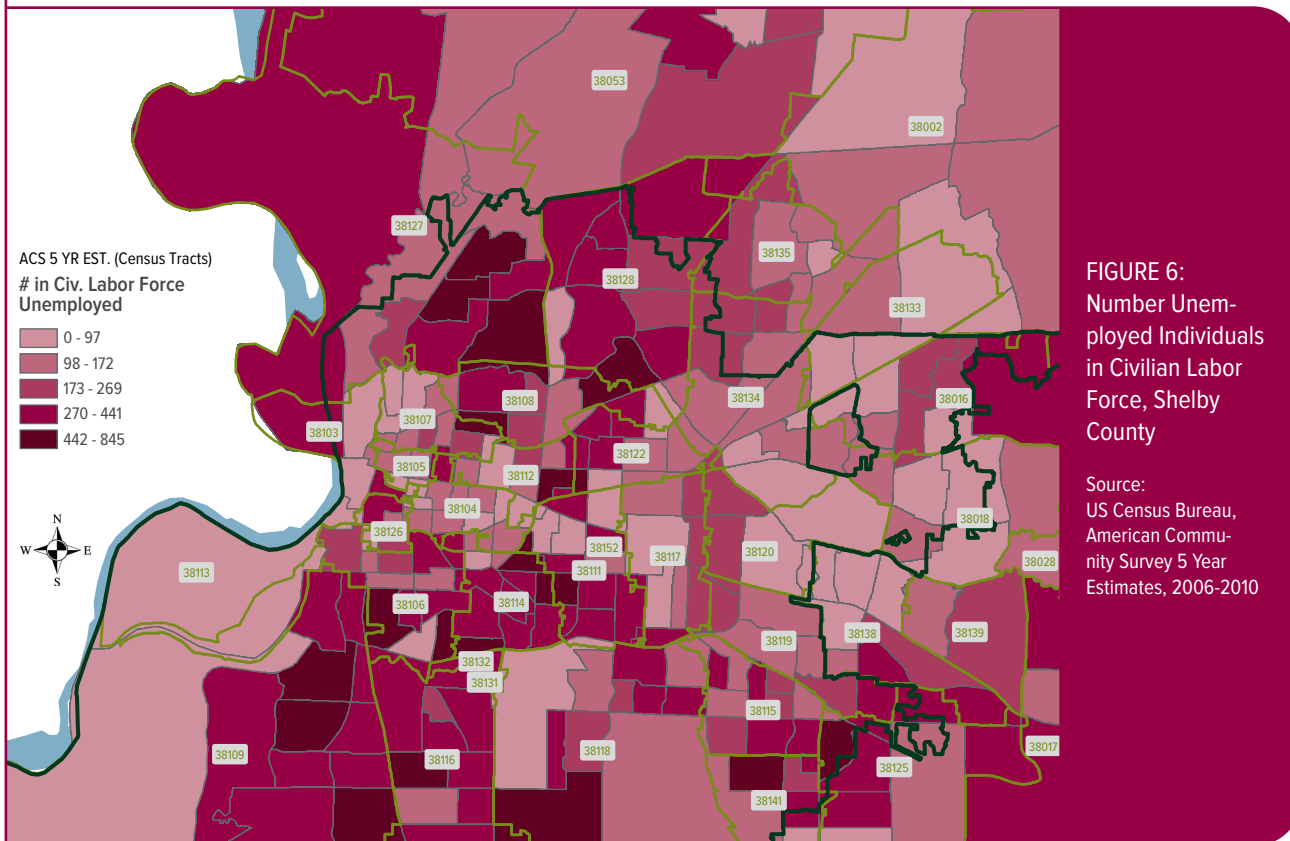
Source:  
US Census Bureau,  
American Community Survey 5 Year  
Estimates, 2006-2010



## Public Assistance

Further evidence of the economic distress experienced by many Shelby County families is presented in FIGURE 5, which shows the receipt of public assistance income.

- Tract 45 (Zip Code 38126) has the highest percentage of households receiving public assistance (21.6 %).
- 34 out of 221 tracts have no households receiving public assistance.



**FIGURE 6:**  
Number Unemployed Individuals in Civilian Labor Force, Shelby County

Source:  
US Census Bureau,  
American Community Survey 5 Year  
Estimates, 2006-2010

## Unemployment

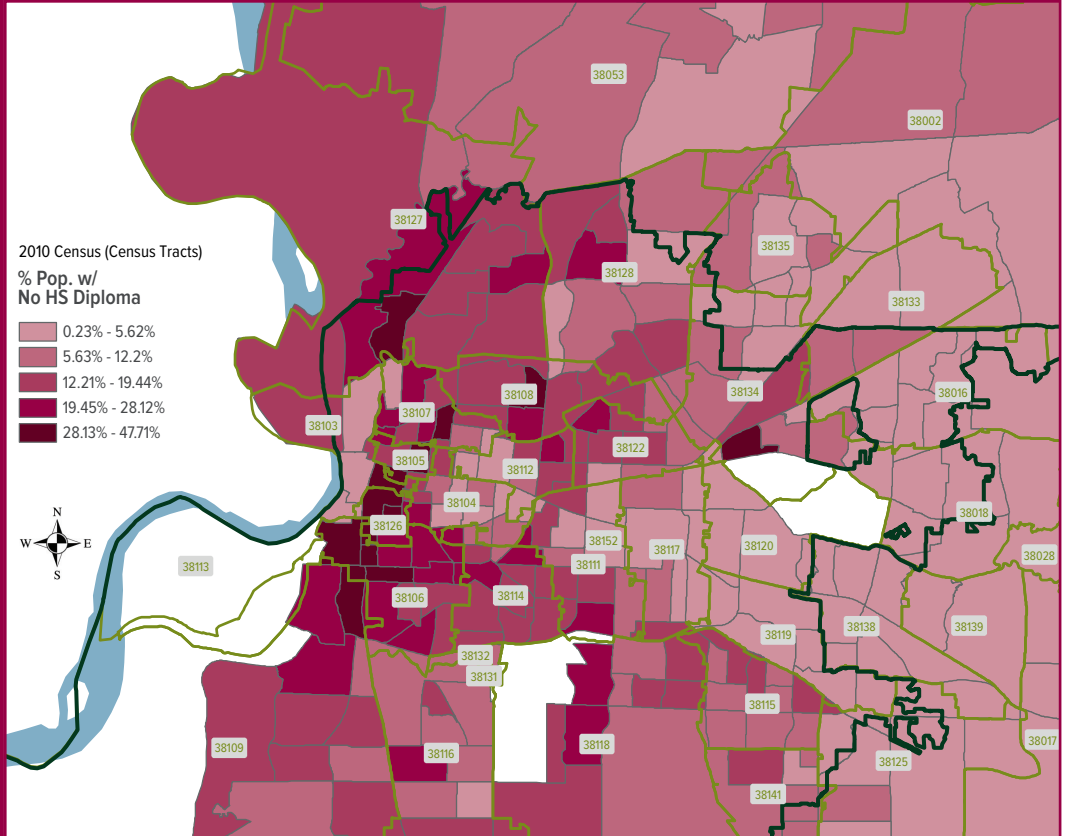
FIGURE 6 shows Census Tract patterns of unemployment in Shelby County. (Our measure of unemployment is based on census estimates of individuals who were not working but were able, available, and actively looking for work.)

- The largest number of people unemployed is in Census Tract 100 (Zip Codes 38114/38104) with 845 unemployed.
- The largest percentage of people unemployed is in Tract 46 (38104) with 24.6 % unemployed.
- The lowest number of people unemployed is in Tract 37 (38103/38104) with 8 individuals.
- The lowest percentage of people unemployed is in Tract 37 (38103/38104) with 0.6% unemployed.

## Education promotes positive and effective parenting.

**FIGURE 7:**  
Percent of Individuals with no High School Diploma, Shelby County

Source:  
US Census Bureau,  
American Community Survey 5 Year  
Estimates, 2006-2010



Parental education is strongly tied to children's well-being. Better-educated parents tend to engage in more positive parenting and create more positive home environments for their children.<sup>11</sup>

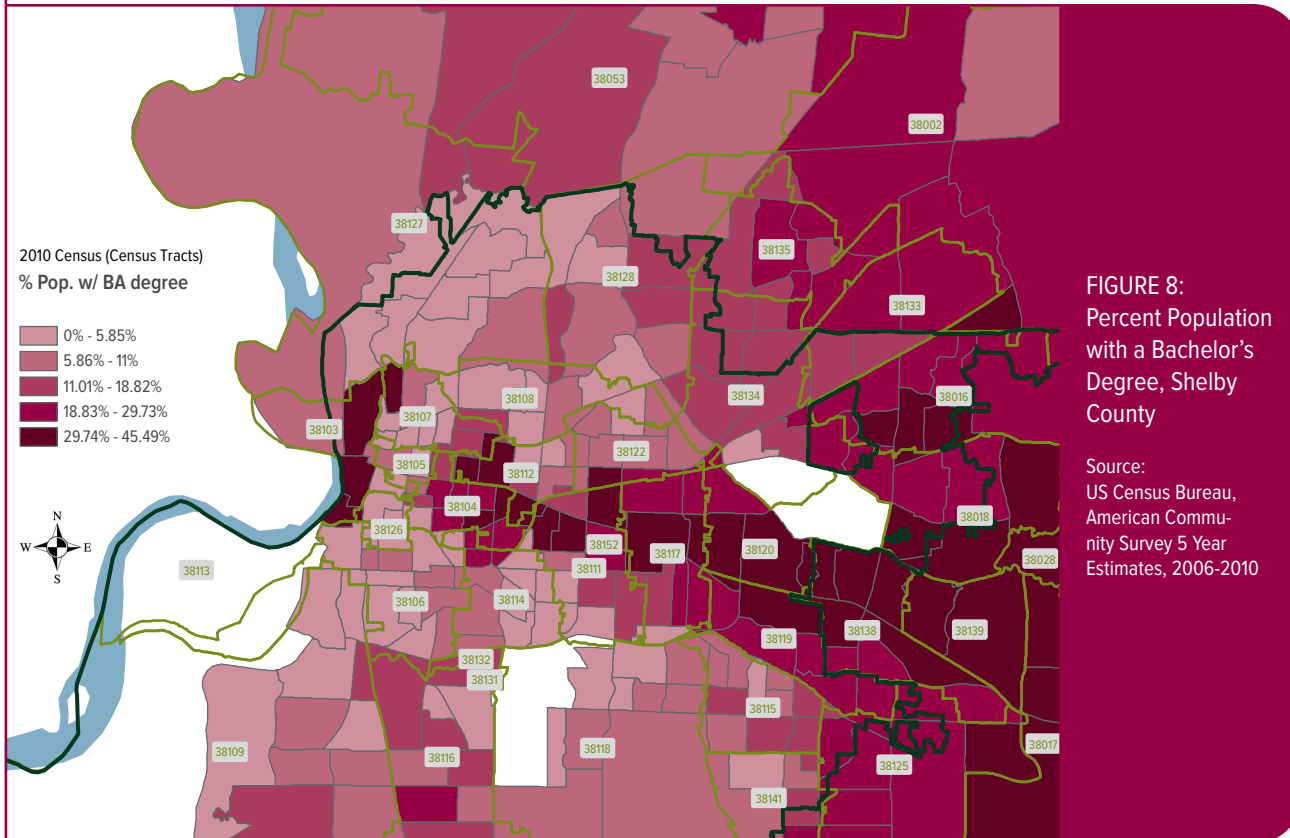


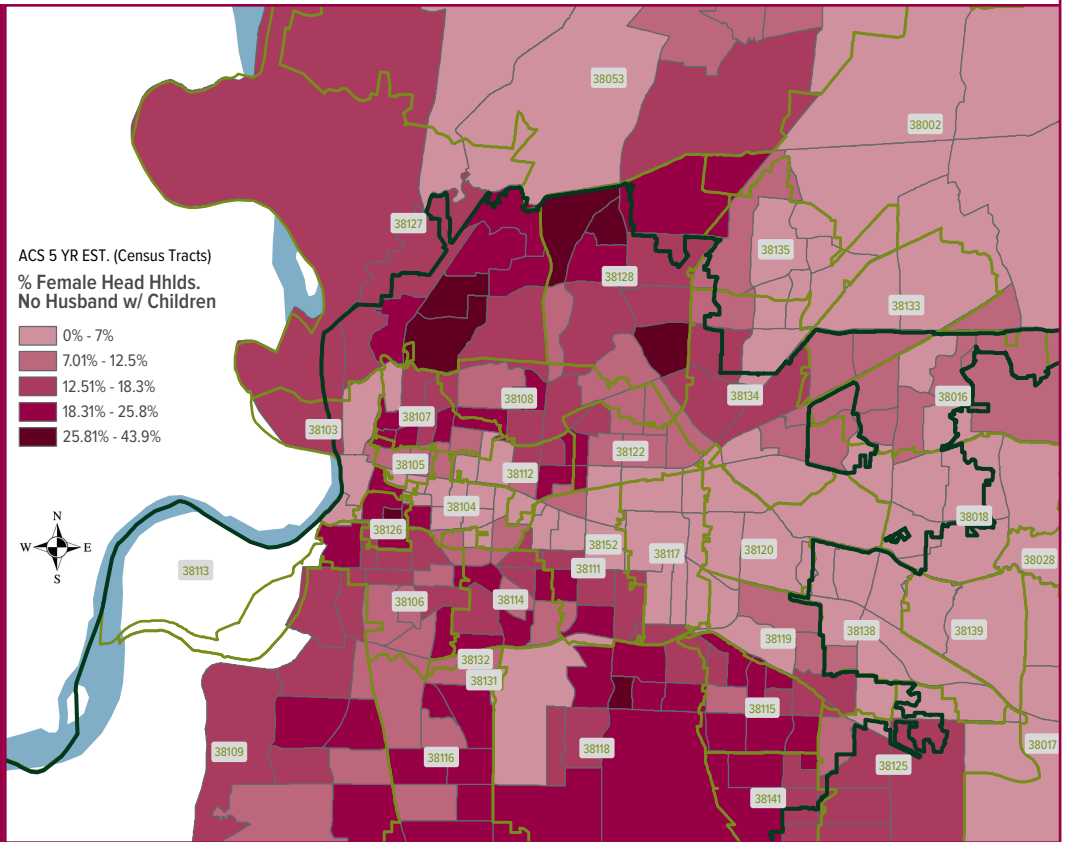
FIGURE 8:  
Percent Population  
with a Bachelor's  
Degree, Shelby  
County

FIGURES 7 and 8 show the low levels of educational attainment among Shelby County adults. FIGURE 7 presents the distribution of adults without a high school diploma; FIGURE 8 shows the percentages of residents who have earned a Bachelor of Arts degree.

- Census Tracts with the highest percentages of adults with no high school diplomas are found in Zip Codes 38126 and 38106.
- According to census estimates, Census Tract 4 (Zip Codes 38107/38108), Tract 14 (38112), Tract 45 (38126), and Tract 2 (38107) have 0 individuals that have earned a BA degree.
- Zip Code 38139 contains the Census Tracts with the highest number of individuals who have earned BA Degrees.

**FIGURE 9:**  
Percent of Female  
Head of House-  
hold, No Husband  
Present, with  
Children, Shelby  
County

Source:  
US Census Bureau,  
American Commu-  
nity Survey 5 Year  
Estimates, 2006-2010



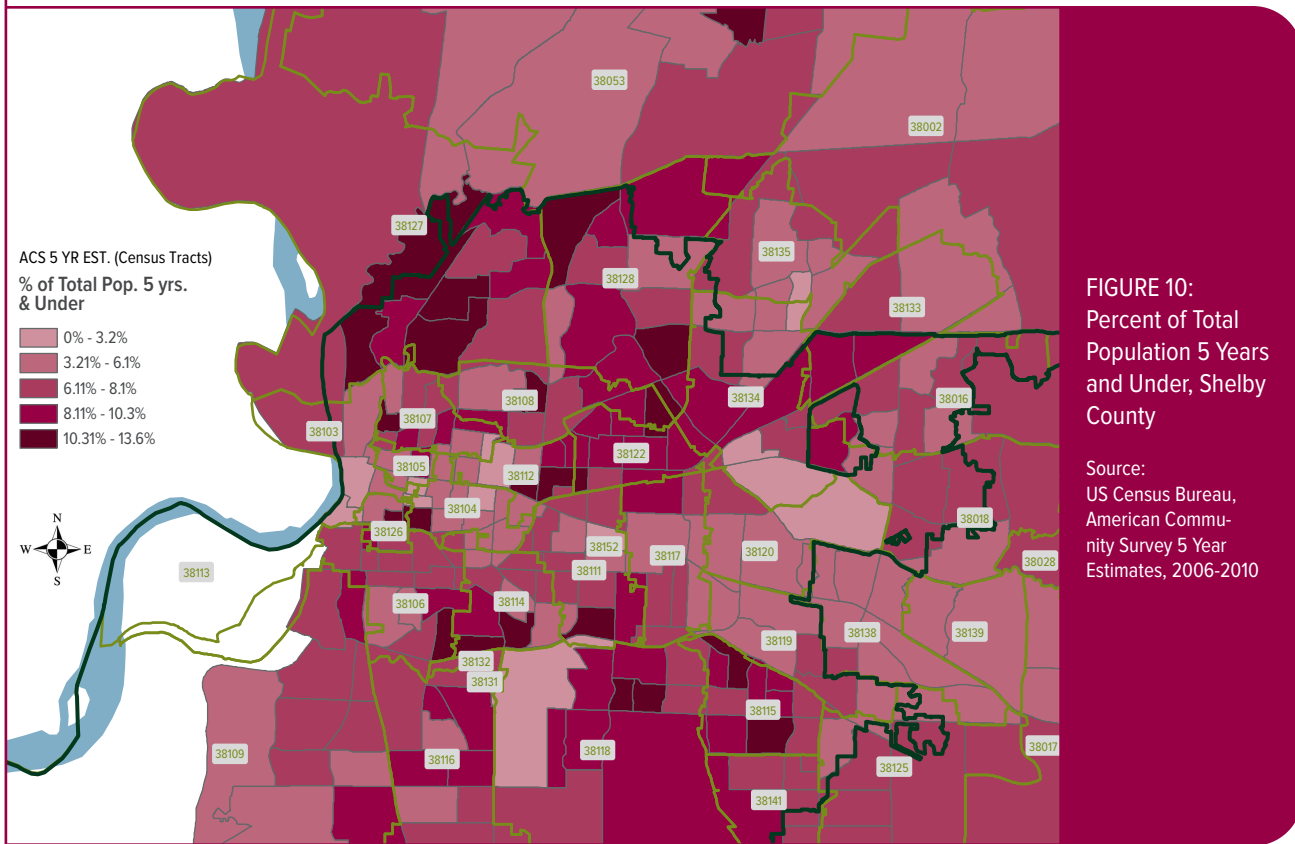
### On average, children in single-parent families are at higher risk than other children.

Researchers have tried to determine why children in single-parent families tend to have worse outcomes than children of married parents. Many studies of family structure conclude that it is not living with a single-parent that places a child at risk, but the economic difficulties and other problems that often accompany single-parenthood. Other studies find that children of single-parents fare worse than children of married couples, even when family incomes are similar.<sup>8, 12</sup>

FIGURE 9 shows Census Tract percentages of single-mother households with children.

- Census Tract 45 (Zip Code 38126) has the largest percentage of single-mother families (43.9%).
- Tract 73 (Zip Codes 38111/38117) has the lowest percentage at 0.9 percent.





## Too many of Shelby County’s youngest children are at risk.

Taken together, the statistics presented in this chapter have troubling implications for the well-being of Shelby County’s young children. The prevalence of neighborhood risk factors means that children can be at risk even when their families provide them with a nurturing and stimulating home environment.

Early disadvantage appears to be especially detrimental to children’s development. For example, income and economic circumstances appear to have stronger effects in early childhood than in adolescence.<sup>13</sup>

FIGURE 10 shows the population of children under age 5 in Shelby County. Comparing this pattern to those of the maps above shows that a disproportionate number of our community’s children live in high-risk neighborhoods.

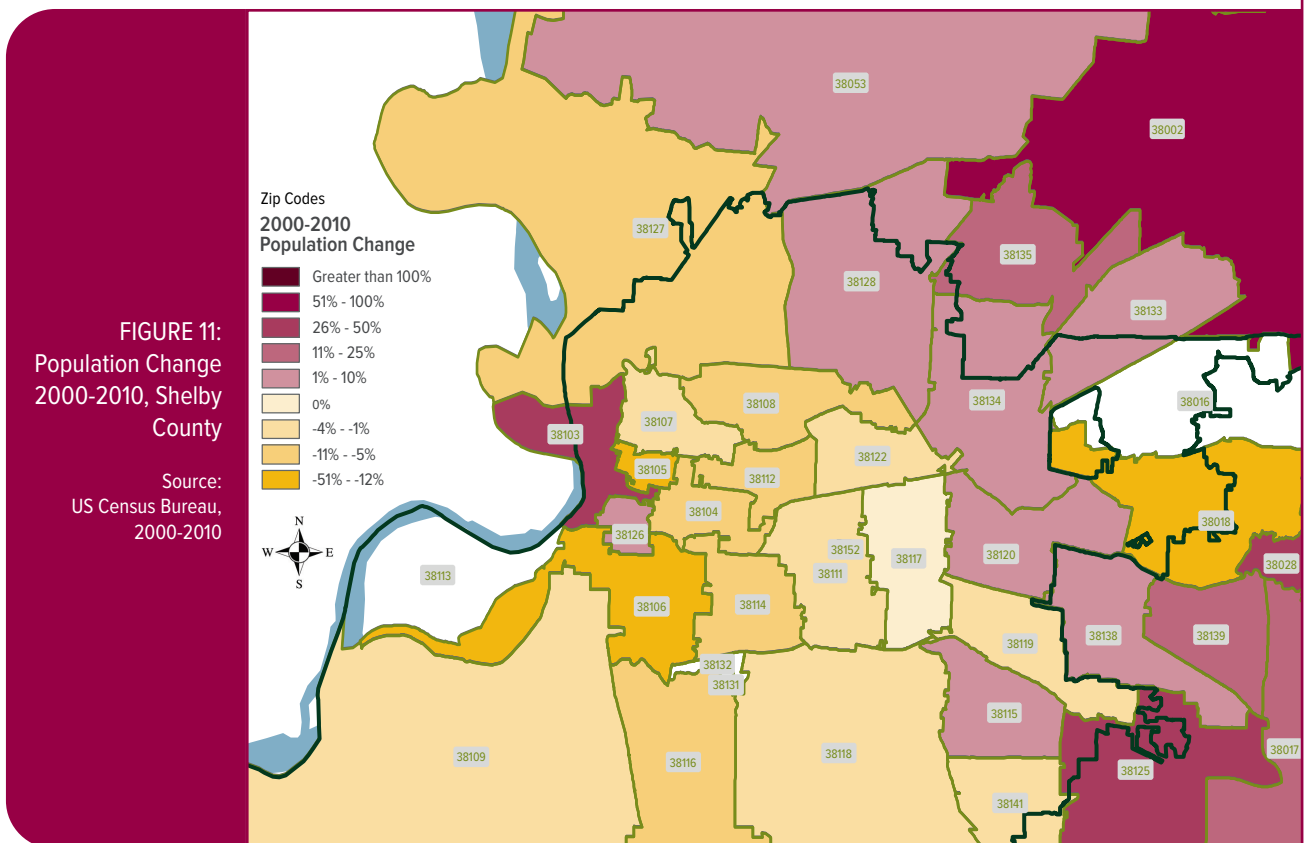
- The Census Tracts with the highest concentration of children are 106.20 (Zip 38118) and 217.10 (Zip Code 38115), each with 13.6 percent.
- The lowest percentage is in Tract 73 (38111/38117) with 1.2%.

## Shelby County is undergoing dramatic population changes.

Shelby County residential patterns have begun to change in recent years. The population of Memphis' central areas is decreasing, while outlying areas of Shelby County are gaining population. In order to combat neighborhood-level risk for Shelby County's children, we need a more thorough understanding of these trends and the ways they will affect the county's future population.

FIGURE 11 shows changes in Shelby County's population by Zip Code from 2000 to 2010. A negative change represents a decrease in population; a positive change represents population growth.

- 38105 and 38106 in Memphis and 38018 in Cordova saw the biggest losses in population between 2000 and 2010.
- 38002 in Arlington and 38103 and 38125 in Memphis saw the most population growth.



## References

1. Galster G, Marcotte DE, Mandell M, et al. The influence of neighborhood poverty during childhood on fertility, education, and earnings outcomes. *Housing Studies*. 2007; 22(5):723-751.
2. Berger LM, Paxson C, Waldfogel J. Income and child development. *Children and Youth Services Review*. 2009; 31: 978–989.
3. Fantuzzo JW, Rouse HL, McDermott PA, et al. Early childhood experiences and kindergarten success: A population-based study of a large urban setting. *School Psychology Review*. 2005; 34: 571-588.
4. Sampson RJ, Morenoff JD, Gannon-Rowley T. Assessing “neighborhood effects”: Social processes and new directions in research. *Annual Review of Sociology*. 2002; 28: 443– 478.
5. Mather M, Rivers KL. *The concentration of negative child outcomes in low-income neighborhoods*. 2006. Annie E. Casey Foundation. Available at: <http://www.aecf.org/upload/publication-files/census.pdf>
6. Leventhal T, Brooks-Gunn J. Changes in neighborhood poverty From 1990 to 2000 and youth’s problem behaviors. *Developmental Psychology*. 2011; 47(6):1680-98.
7. Brooks-Gunn J, Duncan GJ. The effects of poverty on children. *The Future of Children*. 1997; 7(2): 55-71.
8. Sarsour K, Sheridan M, Jutte D, et al. Family socioeconomic status and child executive functions: The roles of language, home environment, and single parenthood. *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society*. 2011; 17: 1–13.
9. Hanson JL, Chandra A, Wolfe BL, et al. Association between income and the hippocampus. *PLoS ONE*. 2011; 6(5): e18712.
10. Noble KG, Houston SM, Kan E, et al. Neural correlates of socioeconomic status in the developing human brain. *Developmental Science*. 2012; in press, 1–12.
11. Magnuson KA, Sexton HR, Davis-Kean PE, et al. Increases in maternal education and young children’s language skills. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*. 2009; 55 (3): 319-350.
12. Carlson MJ, Corcoran ME. Family structure and children’s behavioral and cognitive outcomes. *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 2001; 63(3): 779-792.
13. Duncan GJ, Ziol-Guest KM, Kalil A. Early childhood poverty and adult attainment, behavior, and health. *Child Development*. 2010; 81: 306–325.